

EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

140th Year, No. 97

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

The Hermiston High School wrestling team crosses their arms in X's after winning the 5A state championship Saturday at Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

TITLE X

Bulldogs win 10th state championship, extend reign of dominance

Hermiston wrestling entered a new class at this weekend's state tournament with its 10th title, sealing its place for good among the state's elite programs.

Only four other teams — Newberg, Nyssa, Lowell and Burns — have won 10 or more state championships, and none have been more dominant in a single decade than the Bulldogs. Hermiston has only fallen short of the title once since 2007, a feat matched but never bettered.

The Bulldogs won the title on the backs of three first-time champions — Andy Wagner, Bob Coleman

and Valen Wyse — as well as Sam Colbray, who joins Joey Delgado as Hermiston's only wrestler with four titles to his name. Four others from the team also placed, and by the championship round Saturday night the title was well in hand.

But it wasn't just the Hermiston show at Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in Portland. On the 3A mats, Aristotle Rockwell from Riverside won a title, and Mac-Hi's Rosendo Moreno did the same in the 4A bracket.

For full results from the tournament, see Sports on Page 1B.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Brock McDonough (left) and Sam Colbray hold up the 5A wrestling state championship trophy Hermiston received Saturday night at Veterans Memorial Coliseum as teammate Bob Coleman grins. Colbray and Coleman took first in their weight brackets, while McDonough brought home second place.

Growing by leaps and bounds

Odds of being born on Feb. 29 are one in 1,461

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Trenton Ellis wasn't supposed to be a leap day baby.

Watching her 8-year-old son bounce around the Community Park playground in Pendleton Friday, Andrea Ellis said Trenton was born two weeks earlier than expected, although he still arrived at a robust 8 pounds, 2 ounces on Feb. 29, 2008.

Ellis was one of only two babies born at St. Anthony Hospital on that day that only comes around once every four years, and one of three born in the county altogether.

Leap Day birthdays aren't just a rarity in Eastern Oregon, but for the population at large.

Peter Brouwer, co-founder of the Honor Society Leap Year Day Babies, told *The Daily Mail* that the chances of being born on Feb. 29 are one in 1,461. Brouwer also estimated that there were 200,000 leaplings in the United States and about 5 million internationally.

Because the leap year baby



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Trenton Ellis, 8, who was born on a leap year, stands on a swing at while playing at Community Park on Friday in Pendleton.

club is relatively exclusive, the Ellises have figured out their own routine to celebrate his birth.

On years when February is 28

days, Andrea and her husband, Daniel, pick a day when they're not both working to celebrate Trenton's birthday.

This year, both Daniel and Andrea worked their jobs at

See LEAP/10A

PENDLETON Local ed leaders vie for top job

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The Pendleton School Board cast its net across the West to find its next superintendent, but in the end, board members stuck to Eastern Oregon for the finalists.

The district announced Monday that three finalists would be interviewed to become Pendleton's chief administrator — Pendleton School District Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney, Hermiston School District Deputy Superintendent Wade Smith and Ontario High School Principal Andy Kovach.

According to a press release, all three finalists will meet with the public and district staff at the Pendleton High School library from 3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Tuesday. Following their visits, all three candidates will be interviewed by the school board behind closed doors.

After initially considering 23 candidates, the school board interviewed several and narrowed the field to Mooney, Smith and Kovach.

Mooney is the most familiar with the Pendleton School District, having been hired as the director of human resources in 2008 and promoted to assistant superintendent in 2009.

Prior to her arrival in Pendleton, Mooney spent 13 years working for the Hermiston School District, including stints as a sixth grade teacher, the assistant principal for Armand Larive and Sandstone middle schools and the principal at Rocky Heights Elementary School and Armand Larive.

See SCHOOL/10A



Smith



Mooney

Wolf population reaches triple digits

Population increased 36 percent; fewer attacks

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

For the second year in a row, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife says wolf attacks on livestock have gone down despite an overall increase in the state's wolf population.

ODFW released its 2015 wolf report on Monday, which tallied the number of known wolves in Oregon at 110. That's a 36 percent jump over 2014.

Yet the department confirmed just nine attacks by wolves on livestock in 2015 — compared to 11 attacks in 2014 when the known population was 77 wolves, and 13 in 2013 when the population was

64. Russ Morgan, ODFW wolf coordinator, said the reason is likely some combination of luck, awareness and experience dealing with the predators.

"Certainly, livestock producers understand more and are doing a tremendous amount to prevent depredation," Morgan said. "Some of it could just be the luck of the draw."

Non-lethal deterrents remain the crux of Oregon's wolf management and conservation plan, which entered Phase II last year. One of the most effective tools for ranchers, Morgan said, is simply removing carcasses or bone piles that might attract wolves to their property.

"Of course, a wolf can't depredate if it's not present," he said.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to remove gray wolves from the state endangered species list last fall, though the gray wolf remains federally protected west of highways 395, 78 and 95. Even now, it remains illegal to kill wolves in Eastern Oregon except in very specific cases.

It is possible Oregon could enter Phase III of the wolf plan as early as next year if packs can maintain a minimum of seven breeding pairs. There were 11 breeding pairs in 2015, and eight in 2014. Phase III would allow controlled hunts in areas where wolves habitually prey on livestock.

Todd Nash, a Wallowa County

See WOLF/10A



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